

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY[261]**

**Adopted and Filed Emergency After Notice**

**Rule making related to funds for the empower rural Iowa program**

The Economic Development Authority (IEDA) hereby adopts Chapter 222, “Empower Rural Iowa Program,” Iowa Administrative Code.

*Legal Authority for Rule Making*

This rule making is adopted under the authority provided in 2021 Iowa Acts, House File 871.

*State or Federal Law Implemented*

This rule making implements, in whole or in part, 2021 Iowa Acts, House File 871, section 3.

*Purpose and Summary*

The Empower Rural Iowa Initiative was created by Executive Order Number 3 dated July 18, 2018, which directs IEDA to provide staffing and administrative assistance for the initiative and its associated task forces. Pursuant to 2021 Iowa Acts, House File 871, \$700,000 is appropriated to IEDA for the Empower Rural Iowa Program and IEDA is directed to adopt rules to establish criteria for the distribution of the appropriated funds.

The new Chapter 222 outlines uses of the funds appropriated by 2021 Iowa Acts, House File 871, including the Rural Housing Needs Assessment Grant Program administered pursuant to Chapter 220 and the Rural Innovation Grant Program administered pursuant to Chapter 221. The new chapter also allows funds to be used for other priorities identified and published by the task forces associated with the Empower Rural Iowa Initiative.

*Public Comment and Changes to Rule Making*

Notice of Intended Action for this rule making was published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin on July 28, 2021, as **ARC 5789C**. No public comments were received. No changes from the Notice have been made.

*Reason for Waiver of Normal Effective Date*

Pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.5(2)“b”(1)(b), IEDA finds that the normal effective date of this rule making, 35 days after publication, should be waived and the rule making made effective on September 17, 2021, because the rules provide a source of funding for existing financial assistance programs as well as other priorities of the task forces associated with the Empower Rural Iowa Initiative. These uses of funds will benefit rural communities in Iowa and their residents.

*Adoption of Rule Making*

This rule making was adopted by IEDA on September 17, 2021.

*Fiscal Impact*

This rule making has no fiscal impact to the State of Iowa beyond that of the legislation it is intended to implement.

*Jobs Impact*

After analysis and review of this rule making, no impact on jobs has been found.

### *Waivers*

Any person who believes that the application of the discretionary provisions of this rule making would result in hardship or injustice to that person may petition IEDA for a waiver of the discretionary provisions, if any, pursuant to 261—Chapter 199.

### *Review by Administrative Rules Review Committee*

The Administrative Rules Review Committee, a bipartisan legislative committee which oversees rule making by executive branch agencies, may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this rule making at its [regular monthly meeting](#) or at a special meeting. The Committee's meetings are open to the public, and interested persons may be heard as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.8(6).

### *Effective Date*

This rule making became effective on September 17, 2021.

The following rule-making action is adopted:

Adopt the following **new** 261—Chapter 222:

### CHAPTER 222 EMPOWER RURAL IOWA PROGRAM

**261—222.1(89GA,HF871) Purpose.** The empower rural Iowa initiative was created by Executive Order Number 3 dated July 18, 2018, which directs the authority to provide staffing and administrative assistance for the initiative and its associated task forces. Pursuant to 2021 Iowa Acts, House File 871, the authority is directed to adopt rules to establish criteria for the distribution of funds appropriated in section 3, subsection 11, of the legislation to the empower rural Iowa program.

**261—222.2(89GA,HF871) Definitions.** As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

“*Authority*” means the economic development authority created in Iowa Code section 15.105.

“*Director*” means the director of the authority.

“*Empower rural Iowa initiative*” or “*initiative*” means the initiative created by Executive Order Number 3 dated July 18, 2018.

“*Rural community*” means either an Iowa city with a population of 20,000 or less and that is not contiguous to a city with a population of 40,000 or greater, or an Iowa county that is one of the 88 least populous counties in the state.

**261—222.3(89GA,HF871) Eligible uses of funds.**

**222.3(1)** Funds appropriated to the authority for the empower rural Iowa program shall be used to address the challenges and opportunities of rural communities. Uses of funds shall be approved by the director.

**222.3(2)** Eligible uses of funds include the following:

- a. The rural housing needs assessment grant program administered pursuant to 261—Chapter 220;
- b. The rural innovation grant program administered pursuant to 261—Chapter 221;
- c. Support for entrepreneurship and cooperative business models for businesses in rural communities;
- d. Leadership development training for representatives of rural communities;
- e. Education and training opportunities relating to succession planning for businesses in rural communities;
- f. Promotion of e-commerce opportunities for businesses in rural communities; and

g. Implementation of additional recommendations published by the investing in rural Iowa task force, the growing rural Iowa task force, and the connecting rural Iowa task force created by the empower rural Iowa initiative and administered by the authority.

These rules are intended to implement 2021 Iowa Acts, House File 871.

[Filed Emergency After Notice 9/17/21, effective 9/17/21]

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EDITOR'S NOTE: For replacement pages for IAC, see IAC Supplement 10/6/21.